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Farm and Home Development Highlights



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ARKANSAS STUDY REVEALS ECONOMIC WORTH OF FHD: A study of the labor income of 98 Arkansas FHD families reveals the striking economic progress they are making. The following quotes from a recent issue of the Arkansas FHD Newsletter vividly points up this progress.

"I would like to call to your attention the fact that the 98 Farm and Home Development families whose records for 1955 and 1956 were summarized made 6.2 percent more labor income in 1956 than in 1955. The average Arkansas farmer made 20.5 percent less net income in 1956 than in 1955. It is amazing how through Farm and Home Development these families cut unit costs, increased efficiency, increased size, and greatly increased profits in spite of lower yields in the case of cotton farmers and slightly higher yields in the case of the dairy farmers. Actually, 72 of these 98 farms had an average increase in labor income of \$1,060 per farm in 1956 over 1955."

In terms of dollar difference, these 98 families were \$719 ahead of the average Arkansas farm family in 1956. This represents the difference between their 6.2 percent gain in labor income and the average drop of 20.5 percent in income among Arkansas farm families. If the 98 families are typical of the 831 Arkansas families participating in FHD in 1956, FHD work added nearly \$600,000 farm income to the State.

The Arkansas Extension Service is currently analyzing 1956-57 labor income records of 236 FHD families. You may be able to obtain a copy of the study of the labor income of the 98 families by writing to Director Vines. It's entitled "A Monetary Measure of the Progress of FHD Families in Arkansas."

ADD-A-MILLION: Wisconsin has a new booster for its FHD work in the State Farm Bureau's recently launched "Add-A-Million" program. The program is based on the belief that most Wisconsin farm families can up their annual income some \$2,000 for an annual county total of \$1,000,000--and that FHD is the best way of achieving this goal.

County farm bureaus have been requested to sponsor at least one couple in the Add-A-Million program from each township. Farm Bureau nominating committees select these "key" couples as they are called, explain FHD to them, and work with the extension agents in getting them started in FHD work. Sponsors have been named by the State Farm Bureau to provide follow-through encouragement and support to participating families.

FHD STUDY: The five FES Farm and Home Development task force teams that visited 10 States in May and June are now preparing reports of their observations and their discussions with State and county workers. Purpose of these study visits was to learn with the help of extension workers

in host States where we stand in FHD; what organizational procedures, methods and techniques have worked best and which have proved less satisfactory; major problems; and how FHD work can be strengthened.

Both extension workers in host States and visiting teams are optimistic about the benefits that can come from this study. States visited were selected with the view of providing a good cross-section of the national situation. They are: Maine, West Virginia, Mississippi, Kentucky, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Iowa, Colorado, and Utah. Team members making the study are Lillie Alexander, E. P. Callahan, J. E. Crosby, Jr., Loretta Cowden, Starley Hunter, Beatrice Judkins, J. R. Paulling, Bryan Phifer, Helen Turner, and Larry Vaughan.

The FES teams undertook to discuss Farm and Home Development work with administrators, steering committees, specialists, supervisors, county workers and farm families. All teams employed the same outline to assure uniformity in their discussions in order to facilitate analysis of individual State reports and preparation of the summary report of all 10 States.

This report should be available by early fall. We hope to have FES staff members, in the course of their other field work, discuss these findings in each State during the months ahead.

FHD TO BE FEATURED What farm families engaged in FHD think of it will be
IN PROGRESSIVE FARMER: featured in a story scheduled for September publica-
 tion in The Progressive Farmer magazine. Arkansas
will provide the staging. T. P. Head, Associate Editor of Progressive Farmer,
spent a week in Arkansas this spring observing Farm and Home Development work
in six counties. You'll probably want to be on the lookout for this story.

FHD ON THE INCREASE In a recent letter outlining some of their FHD progress,
IN PUERTO RICO: Vice-Director Perez-Garcia of Puerto Rico says in part:

"Seven hundred and ninety three farm families are participating actively in FHD. They represent a cross-section of the rural farm population of the Island. Approximately 60 percent of the families are in the medium income bracket, 10 percent in the high income bracket, and around 30 percent in the low income group. Rural youth (4-H and non-4-H) participation in FHD has been increasing. At present, 335 FHD families have 4-H members whose projects directly support the family's farm and home plans."

"Extension county leaders, through the county farm and home advisory committees, are sponsoring FHD in all the Island. Actually, there are about 670 leaders involved in these committees."

Director Perez-Garcia credits their progress to several developments. Among these are improved leadership and wider use of the group approach, effective mass media support, better understanding and participation by extension workers, and active involvement of subject matter specialists in FHD planning and preparation of materials. He adds that they have excellent teamwork with Federal and State agencies in carrying out FHD work. Some 270 FHD families have obtained FHA credit, and 142 of these have constructed new homes through FHA housing loans.

FHD HELPS TEACH GOOD FORESTRY PRACTICES: Our FES forestry specialists report that many extension foresters have observed that FHD provides an unusually effective means of directing the attention of agents and families to income possibilities from sound forestry practices. This is heartening in view of the fact that many agents consider good forestry practices difficult to teach. Extension forester C. W. Hall of South Carolina provides this example:

One of the FHD families that Richland County Assistant Agent Robert Burly is working with has developed timber as an important supplementary enterprise. Main enterprises are truck crops, small grains and swine. When the family determined a few years ago that the purchase of 40 acres of nearby bottomland was a wise move, they budgeted their timber crop to pay for it. A four-year harvest of from 4 to 10 acres of shortleaf pine yielding 40 to 50 thousand board feet of timber has paid for the bottomland with money left over for a large pond and the purchase of some equipment. By harvesting the timber in mid-winter to assure natural reseeding, there is a vigorous stand of pine seedlings.

MISSISSIPPI WORKERS CITE TWO REASONS FOR STRONG FHD WORK: Mississippi extension workers credit strong administrative support and a sound, ongoing training program as major factors in FHD progress in Mississippi. This progress currently embraces 3,840 families.

The Mississippi training program includes annual 3-week shortcourses at Mississippi State University, periodic workshops, and district agent training meetings. FHD training is also emphasized in orientation conferences for new agents. Actual field work plays a prominent role in all FHD training. In district FHD training meetings, for example, morning sessions are devoted to an exchange of experience by agents and to new subject matter. Afternoons are spent visiting a FHD family under the guidance of the host agents where problems and solutions are studied first hand with the farm family. District training meetings are conducted under the guidance of men and women supervisors.

An example of strong administrative support cited by Mississippi agents is the active participation of the dean, director and home demonstration leader in training activities. All three attended the recent FHD workshop despite other pressing activities on campus. In addition to their strong endorsement of FHD work, they voiced the opinion that agents working primarily on FHD should be calling on other county staff members for help, rather than the other way around.

FHD PROGRESS: We are enclosing a summary of FHD work for 1957 drawn from the annual statistical report. While many interesting comparisons can be made, one of the most significant is the decrease in the number of families enrolled despite the increase in number of participating families. This reflects the problem of "graduating" families in order to work with more new ones.

Other interesting comparisons include enrollment by States and by regions, types of families worked with, and the number of families served in groups and individually.

HAVE YOU SEEN

UTAH's leaflet entitled "From Hopes to Realities Through Farm and Home Planning." It's an unusually clever device for engaging the entire family in establishing goals and interesting them in FHD. Both juniors and adults are encouraged to participate. Goals are classified in terms of (1) needs, defined as "hurting" problems, (2) wants, which can be postponed, and (3) hopes, which are ambitions for "someday maybe." Next step is to establish priorities among needs. From this point, discussion of obstacles and solutions follows naturally.

Anyone who finds it difficult to engage the family in discussion of Farm and Home Development may find this approach "just the trick" needed to interest the family.

ARKANSAS' new leaflet "Your 4-H Club Work As A Part of Farm and Home Development." It's a guide to club members and parents on how to fit 4-H projects into FHD work. The leaflet points out that through family planning most 4-H projects can be included in the plans for the farm or home. Five stages in project development, one per year, are suggested for projects selected as a part of family FHD plans.

KANSAS' new film on Balanced Farming and Better Family Living, the name used in Kansas for FHD work. Entitled "Assignment Tangible," the film does a good job of selling FHD and describing what it involves. Many of our staff recently had the privilege of viewing the film during its "Washington premiere." Prints of the 15-minute color film may be purchased from the Kansas State College Extension Service.

SINCLAIR REFINING COMPANY's movie "Things Keep Changin'." It portrays in a dramatic and often humorous way the problems of one farm family and how the family was led by their county and home agent into FHD work as a means of solving its problems. The 40-minute, black and white movie was produced two years ago for use in Sinclair's spring farm shows. We believe many agents will find it a useful tool for interesting families in FHD.

Copies may be obtained on a free-loan basis from Sinclair's regional offices: Write to Sales Promotion Department at these addresses: 600 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 20, N.Y.; 155 N. Wacker Dr., Chicago, Ill.; P. O. Box 1710, Atlanta 1, Ga.; 906 Grand Ave., Kansas City 6, Mo.; Fair Bldg., Fort Worth 2, Tex.; or Room 639, Denver Club Bldg., Denver, Col.

THE USDA FILMSTRIP on Farm and Home Development prepared by members of our staff two years ago. Purpose of the 40-frame, color filmstrip is to help agents explain to groups the concept of FHD, what it involves, and what farm families can expect to get out of it. One copy was sent to each State in November, 1956. Additional copies may be purchased from Photo Lab., Inc., 3825 Georgia Ave., N.W., Washington 1, D. C. We have a few additional copies of the script if you need them.